

REMARKS

This is a full and timely response to the outstanding non-final Office Action mailed March 26, 2010. Claims 1, 5-10, 13, 17-21, 23-27, 29-34, 36-40, and 42 have been amended, and claims 1-2 and 4-42 remain pending in the present application. Reconsideration and allowance of the application and presently pending claims are respectfully requested.

1. Telephone Interview

The Examiner is encouraged to contact Assignee's attorney, after reviewing the present response, to resolve or discuss any questions or outstanding issues in an effort to expedite examination of the present application.

2. Rejection of Claims under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1-2 and 4-42 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over *Flam* (U.S. Patent No. 7,266,764) in view of *Lofton* (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2003/0154116 A1).

a. Claim 1

Independent claim 1 recites:

An issue tracking system, comprising:

a centralized server that transmits a web page comprising a graphical user interface which tracks project issues of a group project over a network to a client device, the graphical user interface being displayable on the client device without installation of the graphical user interface on the client device and enabling a project member to chronicle issues that need to be undertaken within the group project including their statuses, classifications, and individual responsibilities, wherein the statuses comprises indications of a next step that needs to be taken by one or more group members or users on the group project and the classifications comprise costs or values of a specific issue according to group management or administrator;

a database coupled to the centralized server that provides the graphical user interface to the centralized server, the database assisting in tracking at least one project issue related to the group project and at least one topic corresponding to the at least one project issue, to provide access through the centralized server to a plurality of users responsible for resolving the at least one project issue, and to provide a storage option for a user to upload data formats, the at least one topic being a subject,

available for selection by a user using the graphical user interface, under which the at least one project issue is related, the project issue being tracked using the issue tracking system, wherein one or more users familiar with the group project update and view a current status of the project issue using the graphical user interface and the graphical user interface allows for deletion of a project step by the one or more users,

wherein the centralized server transmits a notification to a responsible user for each occurrence of the following: a new project issue has been created, a step toward resolution has been entered for the at least one project issue, or the at least one project issue has been closed;

wherein the at least one topic comprises a first subject involving a maintenance and repair interface to process trouble reports from customers; a second subject involving a change request page listing issues that are being observed in processing of trouble reports from the customers; and a third subject involving an issues page listing internal issues related to handling of the processing of trouble reports.

(Emphasis added).

Independent claim 1 is allowable for at least the reason that *Flam* in view of *Lofton* does not disclose, teach, or suggest at least “wherein the at least one topic comprises a first subject involving a maintenance and repair interface to process trouble reports from customers; a second subject involving a change request page listing issues that are being observed in processing of trouble reports from the customers; and a third subject involving an issues page listing internal issues related to handling of the processing of trouble reports,” as emphasized above.

For example, *Flam* describes a process control system that automatically performs activities based on conditions detected during monitoring. As shown in FIG. 9, a client application of the process control system is installed locally on a computer and is not transmitted from a centralized server. Furthermore, *Flam* describes a system for scheduling administrative queries of a process, such as a service or complaint process for servicing and escalating problems, and does not disclose a system that tracks group project issues in the manner claimed. In the words of *Flam*:

To give a concrete example, one type of process that can be controlled by system 801 is a customer complaint. The exemplary process for dealing with a customer complaint is to assign it to a customer complaint specialist. The customer complaint specialist is to investigate the complaint and reply to the customer within a set time period. If the

reply is not timely, the complaint is escalated to the customer complaint specialist's supervisor, again with a time limit for the supervisor to deal with the problem. The activity that corresponds to the escalation is the dispatch of an email message to the supervisor. In system 801, when the complaint arrives, a PR record for the complaint is made in a table in PR tables 827. When the complaint specialist replies to the customer, the PR record is altered to indicate that the complaint specialist has replied and the time of the reply. System 801 periodically runs a query contained in administrative query tables 845 which queries PR table 833 for PR records that indicate that the complaint specialist has not timely replied. The query further specifies that when the complaint specialist has not timely replied, the activity to be performed is to escalate the complaint by sending email to the supervisor. When system 801 finds such a record, it performs the specified activity, as defined by records in PR activity tables 835 and in action tables 857. System 801 records the time at which the query was run, the fact that the PR record was found and the activity performed in log tables 871. As will be explained in detail later, one function of log tables 871 is to record the state of a process with regard to a given PR record and a given execution of a query and to permit different executions of the given query to result in different activities being performed for the given PR record, depending on the state of the process. For instance, once the escalation is recorded in the log tables with regard to the query and the PR record, further executions of the query will not result in repeated escalation activities. In the terminology that is used in the following, once the query has resulted in the performance of the escalation activity for the given PR record, the given PR record is in a state of Persistent Conditions with regard to the query and because the given PR record is in the state of Persistent Conditions, the escalation activity is not repeated.

Cols. 5-6, lines 35-8. Accordingly, *Flam* describes above that a process for responding to customer complaints has been defined and the system 801 runs queries to check whether the process is being followed and if appropriate actions, such as escalation to a supervisor, needs to be initiated, as defined by the tables defining the process. *Flam* further describes that action undertaken by the system are recorded in system logs. Therefore, *Flam* describes a system for scheduling administrative queries of a process, such as a service or complaint process for servicing and escalating problems, and does not disclose a system that tracks group project issues in the manner claimed. In contrast, in claim 1, a group project is being undertaken by a group or project team, where the claimed graphical user interface chronicles issues being undertaken within the group project including their statuses and individual responsibilities and the steps

being undertaken to complete the group project. Specifically, claim 1 describes tracking topics and issues associated with a particular topic, “wherein the at least one topic comprises a first subject involving a maintenance and repair interface to process trouble reports from customers; a second subject involving a change request page listing issues that are being observed in processing of trouble reports from the customers; and a third subject involving an issues page listing internal issues related to handling of the processing of trouble reports” which is not disclosed nor taught by *Flam*. Further, *Lofton* describes an Internet-based calendar and does not remedy the deficiencies of *Flam*.

Lastly, the system disclosed in *Flam* seemingly describes the transmission of data over a network which is displayed by client and server installed interfaces. *Flam* fails to disclose that the transmitted data contains an interface themselves. As an example, none of the interfaces shown in the figures in *Flam* are displayed within web browsers and appear to be locally installed application interfaces. Accordingly, the cited art fails to disclose “a centralized server that transmits a web page comprising a graphical user interface which tracks project issues of a group project over a network to a client device” or “wherein one or more users familiar with the group project update and view a current status of the project issue using the graphical user interface and the graphical user interface allows for deletion of a project step by the one or more users,” as recited in claim 1.

As a result, claim 1 is patentable over *Flam* in view of *Lofton*, and the rejection of claim 1 should be withdrawn.

c. Claims 2-16

For at least the reasons given above, claim 1 is allowable over the cited art of record. Since claims 2 and 4-16 depend from and include the features of claim 1 and recite additional features, claims 2-16 are allowable as a matter of law over the cited art of record.

d. Claim 17

Independent claim 17 recites:

A method of tracking project issues, comprising:

storing a group project in a standardized format on a centralized database;

transmitting a web page comprising a graphical user interface which tracks project issues over a network to a client device, the graphical user interface being displayable on the client device without installation of the graphical user interface on the client device, the graphical user interface chronicling project issues that need to be undertaken within the group project including their statuses, classifications, and individual responsibilities, wherein the statuses comprise indications of a next step that needs to be taken by one or more group members or users on the group project and the classifications comprise costs or values of a specific project issue according to group management or administrator;

selecting a topic from a plurality of topics corresponding to a project issue being added, wherein the topic is a subject, available for selection by a user using the graphical user interface, under which the project issue is related;

adding the project issue associated with the group project to the centralized database using the graphical user interface, wherein one or more users familiar with the group project update and view a current status of the project issue using the graphical user interface;

directing addition of at least one step taken to resolve the project issue to the centralized database;

transmitting a notification to a responsible user associated with the group project for each occurrence of the following: a new project issue has been created for the group project, a step toward resolution has been entered for the project issue, or the project issue has been closed; and

providing an option to a user to upload a data file using the graphical user interface,

wherein the plurality of topics comprise a first subject involving a maintenance and repair interface to process trouble reports from customers; a second subject involving a change request page listing project issues that are being observed in processing of trouble reports from the customers; and a third subject involving a project issues page listing internal project issues related to handling of the processing of trouble reports.

(Emphasis added).

Independent claim 17 is allowable for at least the reason that *Flam* in view of *Lofton* does not disclose, teach, or suggest at least “wherein the plurality of topics comprise a first subject involving a maintenance and repair interface to process trouble

reports from customers; a second subject involving a change request page listing project issues that are being observed in processing of trouble reports from the customers; and a third subject involving a project issues page listing internal project issues related to handling of the processing of trouble reports,” as emphasized above.

For example, *Flam* describes a process control system that automatically performs activities based on conditions detected during monitoring. As shown in FIG. 9, a client application of the process control system is installed locally on a computer and is not transmitted from a centralized server. Furthermore, *Flam* describes a system for scheduling administrative queries of a process, such as a service or complaint process for servicing and escalating problems, and does not disclose a system that tracks group project issues in the manner claimed. In the words of *Flam*:

To give a concrete example, one type of process that can be controlled by system 801 is a customer complaint. The exemplary process for dealing with a customer complaint is to assign it to a customer complaint specialist. The customer complaint specialist is to investigate the complaint and reply to the customer within a set time period. If the reply is not timely, the complaint is escalated to the customer complaint specialist's supervisor, again with a time limit for the supervisor to deal with the problem. The activity that corresponds to the escalation is the dispatch of an email message to the supervisor. In system 801, when the complaint arrives, a PR record for the complaint is made in a table in PR tables 827. When the complaint specialist replies to the customer, the PR record is altered to indicate that the complaint specialist has replied and the time of the reply. System 801 periodically runs a query contained in administrative query tables 845 which queries PR table 833 for PR records that indicate that the complaint specialist has not timely replied. The query further specifies that when the complaint specialist has not timely replied, the activity to be performed is to escalate the complaint by sending email to the supervisor. When system 801 finds such a record, it performs the specified activity, as defined by records in PR activity tables 835 and in action tables 857. System 801 records the time at which the query was run, the fact that the PR record was found and the activity performed in log tables 871. As will be explained in detail later, one function of log tables 871 is to record the state of a process with regard to a given PR record and a given execution of a query and to permit different executions of the given query to result in different activities being performed for the given PR record, depending on the state of the process. For instance, once the escalation is recorded in the log tables with regard to the query and the PR record, further executions of the query will not result in repeated escalation activities. In the terminology that is used in the following, once the query has resulted in the performance of the

escalation activity for the given PR record, the given PR record is in a state of Persistent Conditions with regard to the query and because the given PR record is in the state of Persistent Conditions, the escalation activity is not repeated.

Cols. 5-6, lines 35-8. Accordingly, *Flam* describes above that a process for responding to customer complaints has been defined and the system 801 runs queries to check whether the process is being followed and if appropriate actions, such as escalation to a supervisor, needs to be initiated, as defined by the tables defining the process. *Flam* further describes that action undertaken by the system are recorded in system logs. Therefore, *Flam* describes a system for scheduling administrative queries of a process, such as a service or complaint process for servicing and escalating problems, and does not disclose a system that tracks group project issues in the manner claimed. In contrast, in claim 17, a group project is being undertaken by a group or project team, where the claimed graphical user interface chronicles project issues being undertaken within the group project including their statuses and individual responsibilities and the steps being undertaken to complete the group project. Specifically, claim 17 describes tracking topics and project issues associated with a particular topic, “wherein the plurality of topics comprise a first subject involving a maintenance and repair interface to process trouble reports from customers; a second subject involving a change request page listing project issues that are being observed in processing of trouble reports from the customers; and a third subject involving a project issues page listing internal project issues related to handling of the processing of trouble reports” which is not disclosed nor taught by *Flam*. Further, *Lofton* describes an Internet-based calendar and does not remedy the deficiencies of *Flam*.

Lastly, the system disclosed in *Flam* seemingly describes the transmission of data over a network which is displayed by client and server installed interfaces. *Flam* fails to disclose that the transmitted data contains an interface themselves. As an example, none of the interfaces shown in the figures in *Flam* are displayed within web browsers and appear to be locally installed application interfaces. Accordingly, the cited art fails to disclose “transmitting a web page comprising a graphical user interface which tracks project issues over a network to a client device” or “wherein one or more users

familiar with the group project update and view a current status of the project issue using the graphical user interface,” as recited in claim 17.

As a result, claim 17 is patentable over *Flam* in view of *Lofton*, and the rejection of claim 17 should be withdrawn.

e. Claims 18-29

For at least the reasons given above, claim 17 is allowable over the cited art of record. Since claims 18-29 depend from and include the features of claim 17 and recite additional features, claims 18-29 are allowable as a matter of law over the cited art of record.

f. Claim 30

Independent claim 30 recites:

A computer readable medium having a program for tracking project issues, the program operable to perform:

storing a group project on a centralized database;

transmitting a web page comprising a graphical user interface which tracks project issues over a network to a client device, the graphical user interface being displayable on the client device without installation of the graphical user interface on the client device, the graphical user interface chronicling the project issues that need to be undertaken within the group project including their statuses, classifications, and individual responsibilities, wherein the statuses comprise indications of a next step that needs to be taken by one or more group members or users on the group project and the classifications comprise costs or values of a specific project issue according to group management or administrator;

selecting a topic from a plurality of topics corresponding to a project issue being added, wherein the topic is a subject, available for selection by a user using the graphical user interface, under which the project issue is related;

adding the project issue associated with the group project to the centralized database using the graphical user interface, wherein one or more users familiar with the group project update and view a current status of the group project using the graphical user interface;

directing addition of at least one step taken to resolve the project issue to the centralized database;

transmitting a notification to a responsible user associated with the group project for each occurrence of the following: a new project issue has been created for the group project, a step toward resolution has been entered for the project issue, or the project issue has been closed; and

providing an option to a user to upload a data file,
wherein the plurality of topics comprise a first subject involving a maintenance and repair interface to process trouble reports from customers; a second subject involving a change request page listing issues that are being observed in processing of trouble reports from the customers; and a third subject involving a project issues page listing internal project issues related to handling of the processing of trouble reports.

(Emphasis added).

Independent claim 30 is allowable for at least the reason that *Flam* in view of *Lofton* does not disclose, teach, or suggest at least “wherein the plurality of topics comprise a first subject involving a maintenance and repair interface to process trouble reports from customers; a second subject involving a change request page listing project issues that are being observed in processing of trouble reports from the customers; and a third subject involving a project issues page listing internal project issues related to handling of the processing of trouble reports,” as emphasized above.

For example, *Flam* describes a process control system that automatically performs activities based on conditions detected during monitoring. As shown in FIG. 9, a client application of the process control system is installed locally on a computer and is not transmitted from a centralized server. Furthermore, *Flam* describes a system for scheduling administrative queries of a process, such as a service or complaint process for servicing and escalating problems, and does not disclose a system that tracks group project issues in the manner claimed. In the words of *Flam*:

To give a concrete example, one type of process that can be controlled by system 801 is a customer complaint. The exemplary process for dealing with a customer complaint is to assign it to a customer complaint specialist. The customer complaint specialist is to investigate the complaint and reply to the customer within a set time period. If the reply is not timely, the complaint is escalated to the customer complaint specialist's supervisor, again with a time limit for the supervisor to deal with the problem. The activity that corresponds to the escalation is the dispatch of an email message to the supervisor. In system 801, when the complaint arrives, a PR record for the complaint is made in a table in PR tables 827. When the complaint specialist replies to the customer, the PR record is altered to indicate that the complaint specialist has replied and the time of the reply. System 801 periodically runs a query contained in

administrative query tables 845 which queries PR table 833 for PR records that indicate that the complaint specialist has not timely replied. The query further specifies that when the complaint specialist has not timely replied, the activity to be performed is to escalate the complaint by sending email to the supervisor. When system 801 finds such a record, it performs the specified activity, as defined by records in PR activity tables 835 and in action tables 857. System 801 records the time at which the query was run, the fact that the PR record was found and the activity performed in log tables 871. As will be explained in detail later, one function of log tables 871 is to record the state of a process with regard to a given PR record and a given execution of a query and to permit different executions of the given query to result in different activities being performed for the given PR record, depending on the state of the process. For instance, once the escalation is recorded in the log tables with regard to the query and the PR record, further executions of the query will not result in repeated escalation activities. In the terminology that is used in the following, once the query has resulted in the performance of the escalation activity for the given PR record, the given PR record is in a state of Persistent Conditions with regard to the query and because the given PR record is in the state of Persistent Conditions, the escalation activity is not repeated.

Cols. 5-6, lines 35-8. Accordingly, *Flam* describes above that a process for responding to customer complaints has been defined and the system 801 runs queries to check whether the process is being followed and if appropriate actions, such as escalation to a supervisor, needs to be initiated, as defined by the tables defining the process. *Flam* further describes that action undertaken by the system are recorded in system logs. Therefore, *Flam* describes a system for scheduling administrative queries of a process, such as a service or complaint process for servicing and escalating problems, and does not disclose a system that tracks group project issues in the manner claimed. In contrast, in claim 30, a group project is being undertaken by a group or project team, where the claimed graphical user interface chronicles project issues being undertaken within the group project including their statuses and individual responsibilities and the steps being undertaken to complete the group project. Specifically, claim 30 describes tracking topics and project issues associated with a particular topic, “wherein the plurality of topics comprise a first subject involving a maintenance and repair interface to process trouble reports from customers; a second subject involving a change request page listing project issues that are being observed in processing of trouble reports from

the customers; and a third subject involving a project issues page listing internal project issues related to handling of the processing of trouble reports” which is not disclosed nor taught by *Flam* . Further, *Lofton* describes an Internet-based calendar and does not remedy the deficiencies of *Flam*.

Lastly, the system disclosed in *Flam* seemingly describes the transmission of data over a network which is displayed by client and server installed interfaces. *Flam* fails to disclose that the transmitted data contains an interface themselves. As an example, none of the interfaces shown in the figures in *Flam* are displayed within web browsers and appear to be locally installed application interfaces. Accordingly, the cited art fails to disclose “transmitting a web page comprising a graphical user interface which tracks project issues over a network to a client device” or “wherein one or more users familiar with the group project update and view a current status of the project issue using the graphical user interface,” as recited in claim 30.

As a result, claim 30 is patentable over *Flam* in view of *Lofton*, and the rejection of claim 30 should be withdrawn.

g. Claims 31-42

For at least the reasons given above, claim 30 is allowable over the cited art of record. Since claims 31-42 depend from and include the features of claim 30 and recite additional features, claims 31-42 are allowable as a matter of law over the cited art of record.

3. Traversal of Finding of Official Notice

In the previous responses, Applicant traversed a finding of Official Notice. In the outstanding final Office Action, it is alleged that Applicant’s traversal was not adequate and therefore, the officially noticed facts are deemed admitted prior art. Assignee again traverses this finding for the reasons previously argued. First, please note that since an RCE was previously filed to enable a new search for prior art, there is no basis for maintaining the finding of admitted prior art, AND, more importantly, the only requirement of the rule to prevent an admission is that applicant provide "A" reason, not that it be

necessarily adequate to convince the Examiner of Applicant's position. Also, it is noted that multiple RCEs have been filed during prosecution of the present application.

CONCLUSION

Any other statements in the Office Action that are not explicitly addressed herein are not intended to be admitted. In addition, any and all findings of inherency are traversed as not having been shown to be necessarily present. Furthermore, any and all findings of well-known art and official notice, or statements interpreted similarly, should not be considered well known for at least the specific and particular reason that the Office Action does not include specific factual findings predicated on sound technical and scientific reasoning to support such conclusions.

For at least the reasons set forth above, all objections and/or rejections have been traversed, rendered moot, and/or accommodated, and that the pending claims are in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the present application and all pending claims are hereby courteously requested. In addition, Assignee reserves the right to address any comments made in the Office Action that were not specifically addressed herein. Thus, such comments should not be deemed admitted by the Assignee. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephonic conference would expedite the examination of this matter, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned agent at (770) 933-9500.

Respectfully submitted,

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